

ECHOES OF THE

Emancipation Proclamation

BY
REV. WILLIAM B. REED, B. D.

Pastor First Baptist Church
Madison, New Jersey

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This is the third of the Series
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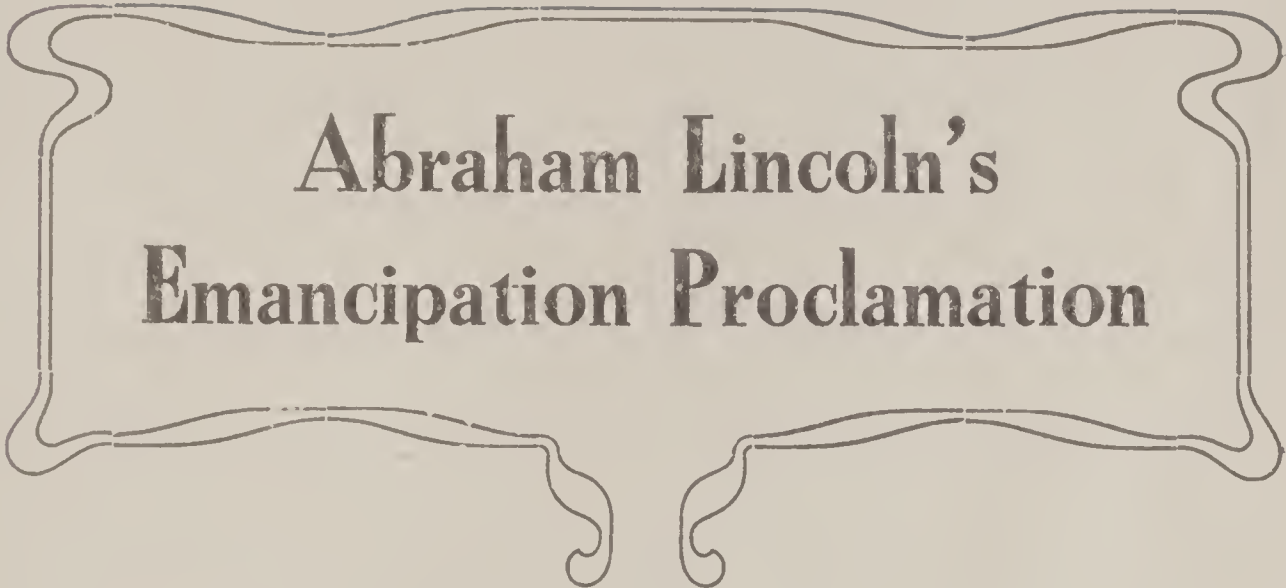
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Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen—

Forty-six years have come and gone since the nation decreed this should be a land of the free and all should be governed alike by an impartial constitution. How well this decree has been observed by the successors of Lincoln and Grant, an almost uninterrupted republican rule shall be the gist of my efforts tonight, in this the third chapter of the series, I am endeavoring to publish on the race question. I write without prejudice to any race, as such, but in the light of righteousness as recorded in the Holy Writ and as reflected in Christian and humane civilization, in defense of a wronged yet obedient people. It is hoped that none who read these booklets will mistake energy and frankness for racial feeling and prejudice. The thousands who have read my other booklets will attest the inference here made.

We are here tonight as on former occasions, to celebrate the issuing of the greatest war measure known to human history. Great because of the long conflict between an intelligent and Christian people of the North, and a brutish people of the South. Great because right triumphed over wrong and great

because the Union had to be baptized in blood and the nation go in mourning for its establishment.

When I look back over the past, many things rise before me, of which I would like to speak, likewise of the present, but time will not allow me now; so I shall touch upon a few things that are vital to us as a race. I wish to talk of the burdens that have been peculiarly put upon our shoulders—grievous burdens, though we have borne them with patience and hope.

It is fitting that I should write on those things that cause us so much grief and suffering. Difficulties no white person has ever known; only those whom the Eternal God made negroes can truly tell of the dismal night through which our pathway leads. Yet, we have been moving onward and upward.

The nation ought to be proud of her colored citizens—a people who came with the founders of the country; labored with the “Fathers;” fell with her soldiers and continuing with her posterity. For almost three centuries we can give a clear account of our stewardship without revealing one disgrace.

I am glad to see some of our white friends here tonight; your fathers were with our fathers in Ante-Belum days, and you are with us now. We hope not to see the day when the good white people will not be with us for right and justice.

In a few weeks from now, the white people of the North, East and West and the colored people of everywhere in the Union will celebrate the one hundredth birthday anniversary of Abraham Lincoln. Those of us who shall be blessed to see that day may count it a special favor of God to be living at that time. When this country shall be decked with flags from ocean to ocean, in celebration of his two hundredth anniversary, we will be gone; so it behooves us to make this the greatest patriotic day of our National life. One hundred years ago this great friend of humanity was born, in a log cabin, in wild Kentucky. His parents were illiterate, poor and unknown; and no one ever dreamed of Abe being anything. One of the brightest stars in his memorial sky is, he had a heart to treat even a black man right. From that cabin and with the same heart, he went to the empire throne of the world. All men honor him for the great soul he had, and the manly deeds he performed. He was impartial in his treatment to all.

Many men have risen high in the ruling councils of the nation, exerted their controlling influence in almost every pathway of human activity, but because of the lack of that broadness of soul to hear the voice of the lowly, without regard to position, race or color, who cry "Master carest thou not that we perish," their influence died while they lived and they were forgotten by the succeeding generation. But when a man rises to true eminence, he rises with that broadness of heart, that takes humanity with him.

Such was the soul of the now living Abraham Lincoln—a man who could say from the lowest depths of his good heart, that he had malice for none. Be thou contented friend, for thou couldst **not** be otherwise, midst the jeweled walls of jasper beyond the pearly gates. We weep with joy, in memory of you this day. Your chair is vacant; statesmanship like unto yourself is waning. Since Sumner, Garrison and McKinley brought to you such glowing news, the principles for which you died, have been assailed by men within the fold; but your work shall stand. Stand, though false friends may rise to power; stand, though the evil spirit that oppressed our men, outraged our women and snatched suckling babes from their mothers' breasts, for two hundred and fifty years, seems to rise to its former glory, your work shall stand.

Coming back to my efforts as stated in the offset, I begin my appeal with the energy and frankness of which I also spoke. In this appeal I shall deal principally with the nullification of the War Amendment, by the same set of men, who defied the Union, bled and died to keep them from the statute books, and its effect. When I say nullification I do not mean that it was legally done, but illegally done as every one knows, upon a hypothesis which they will operate until these affected props are knocked from beneath.

In dealing with this subject the same as the others of my series, I shall keep three things prominently before you: (1) Southern cowardice. (2) Conniving politicians of the North. (3) The ill-treated Negro race.

Of these three the first especially deserves to be exposed to public scorn; which I hope to do by the time this series is closed. The second deserves a stay at home; and the third deserves

sympathy and a square deal, from all good people. In my endeavor to keep these three things before you, I shall ask all who may read these pages to weigh facts and arguments as to Southern cowardice.

Webster defines cowardice as "want of courage to face danger." He quotes Milton who writes of "The cowardice of doing wrong." Upon these two definitions I shall rest my arguments: "The want of courage to face danger," and "the cowardice of doing wrong."

With an unbiased man of even a limited degree of intelligence, the South is condemned to cowardice already. For instance, a mob of three hundred men loaded down with repeating rifles and brick bats have to organize to take one chained and unarmed Negro; while it may be doubted not a single man of the mob would ordinarily meet the Negro, in a fair combat, armed or unarmed, for a life or death struggle.

If a white Southerner is forced into fair combat with a colored man, and the latter gets the better of the conflict, the white man then goes for a mob. This phase of the question of cowardice, will be frequently brought to our notice; so I cannot dwell upon it here. What I have just stated, is a fact, universally known, but not universally announced as such.

For the present let us look into the economical phase of the question. It must be admitted, that there are a very few white men writing against the denied rights of the struggling race—not even those we so loyally support in the political councils of the party of the great Emancipator. As I see it, Negroes must do their own writing—for a time at least.

Another fact, I wish to bring to notice is, that murder is the next thing in order, when a white Southerner fails in an intellectual controversy. This is true between themselves. One of the Tillmans, of South Carolina, shot down the editor of one of the leading papers of the State, on the streets of the Capital; for the simple reason that his editorials were too spicy intellectually, in the side flanks of his unequal combatant. As usual, Tillman was acquitted. We will not give a multiplicity of such incident, for they are too numerous. But very recently, ex-Senator Carmack of Tennessee was murdered for the same offense, and the murderer will, of course, be acquitted. I shall cite one more instance of

white against white and pass on. In 1856 Senator Charles Sumner delivered his unanswerable speech on "The Crime Against Kansas." While Senator Sumner was a statesman of the highest type, he was also one of the leading champions of the denied rights of the lowly. In this great speech—speaking for those who could not speak for themselves—he put the entire army of slave owners on the rack, and picked them to pieces. In the most terrific of his thunder-bolts, he took special aim at Senator Butler of South Carolina, and Senator Douglas of Illinois. I shall give just a short quotation from Senator Sumner's speech, calling for these two men, for special target practice. "Now for something in reference to what has fallen from Senators who have raised themselves to eminence on this floor in championship of human wrongs. I mean the Senator from South Carolina and the Senator from Illinois." Yes, the championship of human wrongs. The South was that, up to that time; she was that then, and she is that today. This two days' speech of Senator Sumner, filled with such awful truths, went to the hearts of the guilty and their sympathizers. The South was furious; because their deeds were evil and they liked darkness rather than light. Two days later Representative Preston S. Brooks of South Carolina "either volunteered or was selected," to perform one of the most "cowardly and audacious assaults" in the history of the nation. Senate had adjourned and only a few gentlemen remained, and while Senator Sumner was busy at his desk, this Representative from South Carolina sneaked upon Mr. Sumner and addressed him in these words: "I have read your speech twice over, carefully. It is a libel on South Carolina and Mr. Butler, who is a relative of mine." The man in his seat was unarmed and in no position to defend himself. The South never strikes a man until he is down. To be exact: "While these words were passing from his lips he commenced a series of blows with a bludgeon, upon the Senator's head, by which the latter was stunned, disabled and smitten down, bleeding and insensible, on the floor of the chamber." Think of this coward and his act—think of such an act right in the Senate chamber; the place dedicated for the best purposes and highest calling of our nation. The place where our laws are made, and Constitution is supposed to be enforced and upheld. Think of such a law maker; but he

represents the ruling spirit of the South. Could any sane man call Brooks anything but a coward—afraid to face danger, physically or intellectually—could any call his act anything but the lowest act of cowardice?

Reason might answer the charge, that he represents the ruling South; but for the sake of the scrupulous and bias I shall let history answer. When Brooks committed this crime of crimes, the democrats were greatly in the majority in both houses of Congress. The few struggling and manly republicans asked for the expulsion of this sneaking self-exalted hero, but the request was indignantly denied. "It shows Mr. Brooks as only a fit representative of the dominating influences of the slave-holding states, where not only did their leading public men and presses endorse the deed as their own, and defend it by voice and vote, but the people generally seemed ready to vie with each other in their professed admiration of his course; so that the bludgeon became the weapon of honor, the bully the hero of the hour." I might give you pages of quotations, but space does not permit. However, the historian says: "The students and officers of the University of Virginia also voted him a cane, on which the leading Democratic organ of the South remarked approvingly: 'The chivalry of the South, it seems, has been thoroughly aroused.'"

Dinners were given in honor of Mr. Brooks and leading statesmen of the South invited to speak words of praise to his heroic deed. I make one more quotation from this author to show the true spirit of republicanism, the principles for which Lincoln died, the principles for which the Civil War was fought and a mighty victory won, and the principles the Negroes have stood by for forty years; and will continue to stand by until God, the righteous Judge, shall do away with darkness in one part of His creation, and light in the other—when some shall go to see Brooks and some shall go to see Sumner.

Senator Burlingame, speaking for a party weak in numbers, but strong in principles, looked his smiling foes in the face and said: "I denounce it (Brooks's act) in the name of the Constitution it violates. I denounce it in the name of the sovereignty of Massachusetts, which was stricken down by the blow. I denounce it in the name of humanity. I denounce it in the name of civilization,

which it outraged. I denounce it in the name of that fair play which bullies and prize-fighters respect. The Senator from Massachusetts sat in the silence of the Senate Chamber, engaged in the employments appertaining to his office, when a member from the House, who had taken an oath to sustain the Constitution, stole into the Senate, a place which had hitherto been held sacred against violence, and smote him as Cain smote his brother." The above quotations are taken from the Life and Public Services of Charles Sumner, by C. Edward Lester.

May I say before leaving this Southern hero that after his party in Congress and the South vindicated him for the sake of further notoriety he resigned his seat in Congress, went back to Great South Carolina, that the people of his State might fall at his feet and hail him the greatest champion of Southern manhood, and re-elect him to Congress—which was done in two weeks' time. May I also call your attention to Mr. Heflin of Alabama, the present law breaker who is in that "sacred" hall to make laws for the people of this great nation to obey? In the recent election he was re-elected by his constituents to continue his seat in Congress. Does any man doubt that the South is proud of Heflin for his cowardly act? They think him great. He shot an unarmed colored man in a public street car in the nation's capital—destroyed the peace and comfort of other passengers while another was shot with wild bullets. He also recommended in one of his campaigns, bomb-throwing at President Roosevelt for exercising his personal liberty in entertaining one of the foremost citizens of the world.

Friends of humanity, upholders of law and order, observers of both right and wrong, you are called upon by ten million loyal and law-abiding citizens to recognize facts wherever you see them. It does not matter on what garment you see the stain, cowardice is but cowardice the world over.

Are there any Burlingames in that "sacred" hall today who will speak in the name of the Constitution, who will speak in defense of humanity, who will demand fair play in the name of civilization; who will speak in the name of the fathers of our freedom, yes, and in the name of God? And in His Great Name, speak for justice and fair play for every man in the land? That is all the colored people of this Union want. Could an enemy

ask for more, or a friend less? Have all the children of the Burlingames passed away; is the spirit of Sumner entirely gone and the principles of Lincoln marked for slaughter?

Shall a revolting South, while civilization rises and the church of Christ advances, make the great North fall at her feet and denounce the principles of their fathers; will you acknowledge that the Civil War was a failure and the soldiers of the Union Army died in vain? If these are not all dead, answer our cries, for we are heavy laden with wrongs. I declare unto you that the South is not afraid of the ignorant Negro, as they say in their sham cry of Negro rule. They are afraid of the intelligent, self-sacrificing and educated Negro. They are afraid of the Negro who is prepared to meet them in debate, and will so meet them, if you will stop the mob, on their merits. I again declare unto you, that the South is not willing to meet the Negro, man for man, on his merits in any way. I further declare unto you, that this is cowardice. It is cowardice in its blackest form.

I shall now proceed to discuss the Spartan heroes of the South as to their political dealing with the colored citizens thereof. This has become an old and familiar subject. I shall state (as many writers have stated) how cowardly the South has dealt with the colored race, politically. If any man says the South has not acted cowardly, their own actions show the untruth of it, and history brands him a pitiful conniver. Any man who refuses to meet an issue fairly and squarely on its merits; any man who refuses a black man to go through an examination before reaching the ballot box, and removes such restrictions from the white man; any man who opens the primary, only for the white voter, to the bold and public exclusion of the black voter, must be considered, if not announced by all decent people a coward. This is a historical fact concerning the South. The Southern side of the national Congress is packed with such cowards; and records defy contradiction; men charged to the brim with vituperation; eyes quivering like so many warring stars—yet they are there on blank ballots. Think of the bold affrontery to a representative government. There is not a republican representative in all Washington, there is not an intelligent man in all the North, that does not know that a great number of these Southern representatives ought to be back in the wilderness from whence they came.

The same is true with Southern State Legislatures, who send such ridiculous characters to the United States Senate.

I see before the American Negro a great intellectual and political battle to be fought; and in this battle the Negro must fire a conspicuous gun. The South has never from the heart accepted what the Civil War decreed; and when the South becomes friendly with a republican president or representative it is because such president or representative is winking at the South's violation of the War Amendments. The fact that the garments of the highest Court in the land are still tainted with racial prejudice, and the present occupancy of the White House is willing that these defiant representatives should retain their unworthy seats, and all the courts of the South are against us, however just our claim, makes the battle all the more intricate. But we are not yet discouraged. We mean to fight until our citizenship shall mean to us, just what it means to other people.

In speaking to the colored citizens at Washington on last Thanksgiving, our President said: "But of one thing we can rest assured, and that is that the only way in which to bring nearer the time when there shall be even an approximately fair solution of the problem is to treat each man on his merits as a man. He should not be treated badly because he happens to be of a given color, nor should he receive immunity for misconduct because he happens to be of a given color." My dear President, ten million humble citizens, loyal members of your party, beg of you that extent of fair play. To treat each man on his merits as a man, is the long and fainting cry of our souls. It is the language of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which you and Congress have the power to enforce.

We ask no immunity because we are colored. Slavery was not fought simply because the victims were colored, but because slavery itself was a sin, and a helpless people—the creatures of God's hand were imposed upon. We do not ask favors because we are colored, but we do ask you in the name of fair play, not to deny us our rights because we are colored. We ask you in the name of your high office to recognize "misconduct" regardless of color, and to brand men who seek "immunity" because they are white. We accept your kind and valuable proposition, and shall proceed to remind you that Southerners are seeking immuni-

ty because they are white.

Coming back to the Spartan heroes of the South I am impelled for the sake of a literal translation of that phrase, and a fair vindication of the charge that the South is seeking immunity because they are white, to go into the defective history of Southern Constitutional Conventions, and how the amendments adopted by the conventions are operated according to color. We regret beyond expression that the President has paid such little attention to the monstrous wrongs committed against our people, while he has studied those of other people all around the globe. We also regret that he does not know these amendments are not "enforced without discrimination as to color." In taking up this great question, I shall quote the President again. According to the newspapers the following is a letter written by Mr. Roosevelt to Mr. Wyndham R. Meredith, a Virginia democrat, which was published since the recent election: "My Dear Mr. Meredith—I have your letter. I do not believe there is a single individual of any consequence who seriously dreams of cutting down Southern representation, and I should have no hesitation in stating anywhere and at any time that so long as the election laws are constitutionally enforced without discrimination as to color the fear that Southern representation in Congress will be cut down is both idle and absurd. Faithfully yours. Theodore Roosevelt."

Now this is simply startling. One aim of my life is to be truthful, another is not to mis-accuse any one, while another is to do unto my fellowman as I would have him to do unto me; yet, I shall not give my feeble denial to the inference made in the President's letter, but I shall let history speak, history, written by able and representative men. I shall let some of the leading magazines of the country deny it, and bear me out that these men are cowards. That they stoop to do things manly men never dreamed of; and that they are afraid to meet the colored man, man for man on "merits." In order to do this, it will be necessary for me to quote at length several magazines, especially The Outlook, a journal, to whose official staff the President has been added, and will make his headquarters at its offices after March next. I cannot take up the conventions and amendments in detail, as it would take up a volume. I shall speak especially of Alabama, Louisiana and North Carolina. I shall not trouble South Carolina

—the proud producer of her Brooks and Tillmans, or the rest of the Southern States of secession fame. The three named will answer present for the others.

Three facts are evident in these conventions. First, that disfranchisement only of the Negro was decided in the minds of the delegates before the conventions assembled for action. Second, that no Negro delegates were accorded membership of these conventions. Third, that the proceedings of these conventions were public and daring enough for everybody to know about them. In the action of these conventions, there is one known fact: That they violate the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and the amendments are not “constitutionally enforced,” as the President seems to think.

“The Alabama Constitutional Convention, which is now in session, is composed of one hundred and fifty-five delegates. It will deal with a variety of questions, but two of these transcend all others in importance—the disfranchisement of the negro, and the division of the public school money between the two races according to the amount of taxes which each pays.”

These are the words of *The Outlook*. And these words bear up the three evident facts as stated above. There were 155 delegates in this convention, and all were white—not a single representative of the colored race; notwithstanding that there are almost as many colored people in Alabama as white. In this we see at least, the cowardice of doing wrong. Taxation without representation is as galling now to the weak colored race, as it was to the weak nation in days when it had to take orders from across the waters, and it is just as impossible to keep this weak race quiet under brutish laws, as it was to keep the weak nation under less severe laws of England. We implore you to deal with us as with other men—as men—and the knotty problem will pass away. Would this country have agreed to a diplomatic council of the nations to settle the question of indemnity between this country and Spain without a representative from this government, while Spain was ably represented? Let any American answer. We would have dyed the Atlantic Ocean in blood and sent a halo of smoke around the earth, rather than abide by such a barbarous decision, had it been done. We see the equivalent in this bias convention of Alabama. One hundred and fifty-five members com-

ing together to strike a foul blow at a people who made the State. A people who converted the vast wilderness into beautiful cotton fields. A people who unstopped the rivers, and made new lines for commerce. A people who built homes for all those delegates and their fathers to live in—must now be defrauded without one representative of seven hundred thousand of the State's founders to speak in their interest.

According to the Twentieth Century Encyclopaedia, we learn that "in 1890, the total population was 1,513,017, of whom 833,718 were white, and 679,299 colored. The total population, white and colored, was 1,828,697 in the census of 1900." Remember, that these 679,299 colored people are citizens and the Federal Constitution has safeguarded their rights as citizens, and they should be heard.

Say what you may, no State has a right to touch the rights of our citizenship. But the enactments of this convention were evil and wrong, with not one spark of right in its enforcement. Listen at President Roosevelt in his last Thanksgiving proclamation: "Let us, therefore, as a people, set our faces resolutely against evil and with broad charity, with kindness and good will toward all with all the strength that is given us for righteousness in public and in private life." I wonder if the President was playing words or whether he spoke from the earnestness of his heart. The statement seems to run counter with his letter to Mr. Meridith. In that letter he seems doubtful whether any disfranchisement laws had been enacted against us according to color, while history, which is unmistakeably plain, says that such laws have been enacted, and that the operation of these reckless enactments is likewise as plain as the full moon on a cloudless night. I ask with all the strength of my humble soul, how can a "single individual of any consequence," acquiesce with the enactment of this convention, which discriminates against a race according to color. All who respect the Constitution, which the enactment violates, cannot respect the enactment which violates. This and the other Southern amendments were based, constructed and are operated according to color.

I ask in all seriousness was it right for this convention to exclude the colored people of their share of representatives, when the State is so nearly balanced? No, not any more right than to break into the house of a lone and defenseless woman at midnight, and

order her from home and city because her husband had evaded the mob. Why did they not invite or admit colored representatives? There can be but two answers: either it was sheer ignorance in not knowing the right from wrong, or it was cowardice; and since some of the foremost men of the white race were delegates to the convention, to my mind, it was the latter—cowardice of doing wrong.

Mr. Max Bennett Thrasher, who represented The Outlook magazine during the session of the Alabama Constitutional Convention, calls things by their proper names; and “wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.” No man can read the facts laid down by Mr. Thrasher, and gainsay it was a white man’s convention, whose purpose was to abridge the colored man’s rights, and not the white man’s. And as anxious as some of the politicians are to unite the North and South, they cannot do it by endorsing the present amendments of the South. If they do, they openly inflict a great wrong on a weak and poor people—they do it by winking at the violation of the Federal Constitution.

Mr. Thrasher says: “At the request of The Outlook I have interviewed several of the leading and representative members of the convention, and summarize here briefly their opinions on these questions.” Again I quote The Outlook, to make clear to you, that these delegates came together for the one thing: the disfranchisement of the colored race and not the white race. In the list of names—all of which I cannot give here—the first is the Chairman of the Convention.

“The Hon. John B. Knox, Chairman of the Convention: ‘No man can say yet what this convention will do. What we want to do is within the limits imposed by the Federal Constitution, to establish white supremacy in the State of Alabama. But, if we would have white supremacy we must establish it by law, not by force or fraud....The delegates to this convention are pledged not to deprive any white man of the right to vote.’” I wish to call special attention to Mr. Knox’s conflicting assertions, and the unsound excuses he makes. Excuses for the thing not yet on the besmeared pages of Alabama’s history, though fixed in their hearts.

In establishing white supremacy he says they would do it by “law, not by force or fraud,” and almost with the same breath, he says: “The delegates to this Convention are pledged not to

deprive any white man of the right to vote." Any man who knows anything about this amendment knows that the entire superstructure with its operation is a fraud, and could not stand the light of a real investigation. Would any sensible man suppose, that if Mr. Knox had been an honest man, he would have lost himself in rapture, at the very name of law, and then tell what he and his fellow-pledges had pledged themselves to do? In the light of my judgment they have pledged to deprive the Negro of his right to vote and grant the right to the white man, however ignorant he may be. Yet this is "law" and not "fraud." The proverb still lives that "Whom the Gods would destroy they first made mad."

When a man has to prove his superiority over another by fraudulent methods he is unworthy the name of a man. It is cowardice to strike a man in the back—that is what this Convention did.

"Ex-Governor Thomas G. Jones of Montgomery, Governor of Alabama from 1890 to 1894:

"We are surrounded by many difficulties, one of which was the pledge made by the Convention which nominated the great majority of the delegates that we would reform the suffrage in obedience to the Constitution of the United States and yet not disfranchise any white man except for crime." This is indeed, interesting, especially when the President does not seem to know that such has been done. Governor Jones says that they did not intend to disfranchise any white man. Can any honest man subscribe to this discrimination on account of color? Think of men, who delight in being called "gentlemen," stooping to such unmanly level of racial discrimination. Think of men, who court the flattery of being called the representatives of Southern chivalry, yet afraid of giving the colored man an equal chance in the race of life. This man was governor over more than half a million people whose rights he did not respect. He was a governor, who protected the rights only of white men; and as a delegate in this Convention he does not hesitate to tell it to the world. He says they would only "disfranchise white men for crime." My friends, they do not even do that, for white men do almost anything in that Commonwealth without molestation. Think of an ex-governor, of one of the States of this Union, committing himself as a party, to such a wanton agreement. Think of this Convention almost to the man coming

together upon such preconcerted plans. Does any Christian, does any fair minded man, does any honest citizen of this country, see one thing so far, worthy of praise, or of the name of manly actions?

Mine to-night is not a plea for sympathy, not for favors, but for fair play, for an equal chance and for the rights and privileges accorded us by the Constitution of the United States. If the spirit of Lincoln rules, we will get it; but if the spirit that comes from secession shame shall rule, we will not get it.

The President-elect a few nights ago, told the North Carolina Society, and the nation, that the cause that brought about the Civil War ought to be forgotten. If Mr. Taft's father was a real abolitionist and heard such unbecoming words coming from the lips (I hope not the heart), of his illustrious son, surely there must have been weeping some where around the beautiful gates. The greatest cause ever espoused by Christian civilization must be forgotten; blot out the memory of the monstrous wrongs of the slave oligarchy, and think no more of the rebellion of '61. That the Grand Army of the Republic dissolve and the veterans of the Union Army and victory cease their re-union. Let the monuments of Lincoln come down, and national cemeteries be despoiled. Ah, I voted for Mr. Taft, while thousands of his now admirers voted against him. I was with him in heart before the election. But ten millions of his fellow-citizens at least will not forget these. And there are millions of whites, who will pass these cherished memories to their children. Ask us not to forget these while the men to whom you spoke, directly, are fostering Ante-Belum principles under new names. A fair chance is all we want, and if the Fifteenth Amendment is enforced, it will be the only right step in that direction. There is but one ultimatum; the Federal Government must rule the South, or the South will again rule the Federal Government.

Mr. Thrasher quotes a few who are less bitter in their attacks on the Negro. The most noticeable is Gen. Oates. "Gen. Wm. C. Oates, member of Congress 1881-1895, and Governor of Alabama 1895-6:

'I am in favor of letting every one of intelligence—not necessarily book-learning—and good character vote....We have extended a helping hand to them. I am opposed to drawing

it back. While this must be a white man's government, the responsibility is all the stronger upon the white man to see that the negro is treated rightly.' "

I am not unmindful of the fact that there are many good men in the South, this was true in the dark days of slavery. Doubtless there are men in the South today, who are willing to give us a fairer deal than Mr. Oates was—as the latter declares this must be a white man's government. We are willing for the majority to rule; but as much as we appreciate men like Mr. Oates, every one knows that such men are few, in comparison with the Knoxes and Joneses—the latter rule every time in dealing with the colored race.

I would like to quote others, but space forbids. I think my contention has been fully substantiated—that the amendment of Alabama is founded upon color. But before leaving the writer, hear what he has to say of the then Senator Morgan, now gone to regions, his Maker only knows.

"Senator John T. Morgan, although not a member of the Convention, has prepared and had presented a lengthy proposition on the suffrage question which contains this radical proposition: 'Persons who are not citizens of the United States, or who are not descended from a father and mother of the white race, shall not be eligible to any office under the Constitution and laws of Alabama.' " These words were spoken by a man who was a law-maker in the United States Senate for many years—an octogenarian. A man who might have spent the time in drawing up this uncharitable "proposition," more profitable, in praying that God might make his black heart, as white as some of the Negroes', whom he had wronged. Is it not difficult to understand, how this highly respected Southern "gentleman" could be so neglectful of his soul, to stand in his grave up to his neck, and breathe such threatenings of damnation against a struggling people? But to the Senator, who is now gone to his long home, all power is in our Master's hand—in heaven, in earth and hell.

I leave Alabama's Constitutional Convention with the opinion of the writer quoted above, under the caption of cowardice, expressed in poetic muse:

"Cowardice
Note this my sin,

And hark thee, friend,
Quit thou the cowards' way!
Here woes begin,
And do not end,
And fortune scorns to stay.
In honor's name,
Good friend, beware!
For he who foots this path,
Consorts with shame,
And grim despair,
And loses all he hath."

—The Outlook, Vol. 68: 437-9. June 22, '01.

We shall now go hurriedly into the Louisiana Constitutional Convention and the effect of its amendment. I can not give space for expostulations in this case as I did in the case of Alabama, I shall do but little more than give details as reported in The Outlook.

One reason I prefer this magazine is, it is the favorite of Mr. Roosevelt, who likes it—not for any stock, which the Standard Oil interests may have in it—but for the general policy of the paper.

I pointed out in the proceedings of the Alabama Convention, that disfranchisement of the Negro was decided upon, in the minds of the delegates, before the Convention assembled for action; and that no Negro delegates were admitted; and that the details were public enough for every one to know about them; especially the readers of The Outlook. Yet, Mr. Roosevelt says that the South need not fear a reduction in Congress, as long as they do not discriminate on account of color.

"In February, 1898, there assembled in Tulane Hall, New Orleans, a Constitutional Convention whose main object was to frame new suffrage requirements that would legally or quasi-legally eliminate the negro from politics, and thus obviate the necessity of a continued use of 'shotgun tactics' to accomplish that end. Owing to the fact that the Convention wished to disfranchise the blacks alone....the system finally adopted is a complicated one....'No male person who was on January 1, 1867, or at any date prior thereto, entitled to vote under the Constitution or statutes of any States of the United States wherein he then resided, and no son

or grandson of any such person not less than twenty-one years of age at the adoption of this Constitution, and no person of foreign birth who was naturalized prior to the first day of January, 1868, shall be denied the right to register and vote in this State by reason of his failure to possess the educational or property qualification.'” No one can read this straight-forward statement carefully, without understanding the principle of the people composing this Convention without seeing the cowardice of having done, and still doing wrong. Think of a people, whom Mr. Taft says represent the purest blood of the nation, skulking from qualifications, which the Negro is required to possess. They made it possible for almost all the whites to vote; while on the other hand they made it possible for almost all the colored people to be denied registration. Is there anything in all history more daring? Would it not have seemed unmanly on the part of Goliath, had he stolen up behind little David, and struck him unprotected, in the back? The thing that is beautiful about this contest is, the great and the small had equal chance to fight for the rights of their people.

Louisiana most cowardly struck the colored citizens in the back, while unprotected. “The ‘naturalization’ and ‘grandfathers’ clauses furnish loop-holes for practically all the poor and illiterate whites, while since in none but a very few States were negroes entitled to vote on January 1, 1867.” I am not writing with prejudiced feelings, but I am after the real facts. I wish to unmask the falsehood about no discrimination on account of color. I want to give the people in authority the pleasure of finding something else to say.

“On January 1, 1897, the total number of registered voters throughout the State (under Act 123 of 1880) was as follows (figures incomplete): Whites, 164,088; Negroes, 130,344; Literate Whites, 133,608; Whites who made their X mark, 28,371; Literate negroes, 33,803; Negroes who made their X mark, 94,498.

The registration for the election of 1900 under the Constitution of 1898 was as follows:

Whites	125,437
Negroes	5,320
Registration under ‘grandfathers’ and ‘naturalization’ clauses	29,187

Whites coming in under educational qualifications.....	86,157
Whites coming in under property qualifications.....	10,793
Negroes coming in under educational qualifications.....	4,327
Negroes coming in under property qualifications.....	916

The registration officers have one education standard for the negro and another for the white.'—The Outlook, V. 71; 163-6. May 17, '02.

I am sure The Outlook has stated matters regarding this Convention and the effect of the amendment plainly enough for every one. No man who wants to see, cannot fail to see the evil it hurls against the colored race, the injustice of its formation, the robbery and the wickedness of its operation. Can the great American people not afford to treat the weak and offenseless colored race with justice? Examine the figures above and see how the so-called Christian people of Louisiana have wronged a people, who are trying to rise honestly from the toil of their hands, and the working of their brain. The record of Louisiana is on high. God never smiles upon a people, guilty of such woeful crimes. Slavery fell and this miserable amendment must follow in its wake. The Negroes of this country do not want a compromise; they want just what other men want—no more and no less.

No man will ever be able to tell all the wrongs these amendments are inflicting, directly and directly, upon my people.

The ballot is the most potent weapon any people can hope to have; take it away and they are truly disarmed. They have no prestige in the State; no voice in the government and no appeal in the courts. Our people are subjected to insults, cruelties and assaults from every Negro hater in the land. Aside from the general political wrongs, there are three great and grievous wrongs, as an outcome of a people being politically disarmed—though temporarily: First, the insults to which our women are subjected. Second, the cruelty colored men undergo from the hands of these disfranchisers and their sympathizers. Third, the unpleasantness forced upon us by public carriers. The remaining chapters of my series will be given principally to these wrongs. I cannot resist, however, the temptation to speak of the third to-night hurriedly.

The condonation of the President to the savage wrongs of the South has done the colored race an inestimable injury. His failure to

ask for legislation, on the investigation of disfranchisement laws, or reduction of Southern representation, has emboldened negro-haters and made them excessive in their mistreatment of the colored man. His announcement that there was no law against Jim Crow cars was a hard blow to a people whose hearts went out to him.

The colored race will no more submit to Jim Crow law than disfranchisement, its elder brother. And the operation of this inhuman rule will be an imposition, and not an accepted law with the entire race.

It is not the principle of the Republican party to impose on the colored man. If the President knew how respectable people of our race are treated, on trains and steamboats, etc., I believe he would have remained silent rather than fostered this unholy cause. The Fourteenth Amendment says: "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States." Of all the races of the Union, Jim Crow laws abridge only the privileges of the colored race. In the South we are not privileged to dining cars, railroad restaurants, sleeping cars, decent coaches or waiting rooms. The white passengers have all the necessary accommodations, and are well treated, while the colored passengers have none of them, but they pay the same fare. No accommodations, save, for the most part, a few uncared-for seats in a baggage car, which is constantly occupied by trainmen, and often by section men. In these few exiled seats there are two double seats, which are occupied by conductor and newsboy, who have the boldness to ask passengers out of them.

If the President had to ride some night on the Norfolk and Western road, going west from Norfolk, in the Jim Crow car, he would have a different idea of this mean system. I speak of this road because the cars for colored people are most miserable. On this road they have, in Virginia, what is considered a very fine train called the Cannon Ball. On this train care is taken of the colored passengers. They ride in the middle of one coach with smoking rooms at each end of the car.

In the advertising literature of the Southern Railroad I quote the advertisement for one train, issue of April 12, 1908:

"New York and Memphis Limited 47. One car between Memphis and New York. One car (first-class coach) between Memphis and Washington. One car (baggage car and coach) between Mem-

phis and Washington. One car (dining) between Chattannoga and E. Radford, Va."

Three things I wish to especially point out are: First, it is an interstate carrier using discrimination against one passenger for another. Second, the company advertises "first-class coach" for white passengers and "baggage" car for colored passengers. Third, that Pullman and dining car privileges are denied colored passengers, who pay the same for transportation as white passengers, who are not denied these privileges. "Baggage car and coach" are smooth names for Jim Crow—a car divided, one-half for baggage and one-half for passengers. In the half for passengers a part of it is cut off for smoking; the baggagemen make it their business to come out in shirt-sleeves and overalls, to lounge with the conductor and newsboy, and often crowd out the passengers. This is a condition that only colored people can truly know. To be huddled up in a box like that for a thousand miles, through hot and dusty regions, with no provision for eating or sleeping if desired, is a sad and savage state of affairs. This is only one of the Jim Crow horrors. We do not want equivalent, but equality, which means no Jim Crow, but every man travel on his "merits as a man." I leave the Southern Railroad for the present with a quotation taken from my own diary, under date September 28, 1908: "Harrisonburg, Va. Left Newark, N. J., 12:47 A. M. Left Washington, D. C., by B. & O. road 9:10. Changed at Harpers Ferry. 'Colored' written outside B. & O. baggage car. Took Southern Ry. at Strasburg. The colored box like a hog-pen, etc." My friends, this car was a disgrace to the age in which we live—the most filthy I have yet seen. The fat, indolent conductor and sore-armed newsboy evidently had eaten fruit and chewed tobacco alternately since leaving Washington. Trash and spittle covered the floor from one end of the car to the other; the car was infested with flies and had a sickening odor. This is a faint description; but the car came out of the Union Depot of the Capital City.

Since the courts, Interstate Commerce Commissioners and the White House say amen to these terrible conditions, we must now appeal to Congress, to the consciences of good citizens and to God.

The Clyde Steamship Company, plying the Atlantic Ocean from New York City to Jacksonville, Fla., makes no attempt at preparation for colored passengers. If they wish to go in the storage to

spend about three days of sea voyage on boxes, etc., they may do so; this is common with Southern steamers, but this line runs into New York, where the civil rights bill stands an honor to the manhood of New York. Florida has a half million of people, nearly equally divided between the races; and nearly a quarter of a million of people are not privileged to this interstate carrier. The colored people of New York, New Jersey and New England are also denied all privileges on this common carrier. We ask for relief, and relief is the ballot. Let the negro say who is to represent him in Congress, and Jim Crow will fade away.

I advance to say that if that "first-class coach" was two and a half cents per mile, and the "baggage" and passenger coach combined called for two cents per mile, there would be more white people in the "baggage" (Jim Crow) car than colored.

In Lynchburg, Va., they have white teachers in the colored high school; and recently a white lady was appointed principal of the colored grammar school. These teachers can stay in class room with colored children all day, for money, but cannot ride with them on the street cars. The South does so many things in the dark, which negroes must bring to light. This is a perilous stand, however, for those of us who undertake it, because the South has not yet reached that degree of Northern civilization to admit freedom of speech.

Mr. Roosevelt says that few men of consequence are asking for reduction of Southern representation in Congress. Can any fair-minded man read the aftermath of the Constitutional amendment of Louisiana, as given above, and agree with Mr. Roosevelt? Do not see us as black men, not as complainers, not as cringers of immunities, but as men, as citizens asking for fair play—that's all.

When the President wrote this letter to this Southern Democrat, it seems strange that he should forget that the platform on which he was elected President of the United States called for the reduction of these men in Congress, who held their seats in the ashes of disfranchised citizens. Not only that, but the Republican Club of New York, of which the President is a member, took issue with the President on this statement. They not only voted resolutions to the contrary, but declared he had crossed "party lines."

I declare to the President, to Congress and to the citizens of this great country, that any men guilty of the crimes committed in this

revised suffrage amendment of Louisiana, instead of being winked at, should be classed as Orchard and his band, as "undesirable citizens."

I shall next call to your notice the North Carolina suffrage amendment. Owing to the space given to the two former States, I can only say a few words about this amendment and its operation.

What is true of the first two States I have mentioned is true of North Carolina, as concerning discrimination against color. The naturalization and grandfathers' clauses, that made "loopholes" for the whites, is true here, only, in this case, it is more specific in its limitation. I regret that I cannot give space at this juncture to the red-shirt campaign, that brought about the triumph of the Democratic ticket at the time this amendment was adopted. But let the colored people hope that if North Carolina can stoop to the barbaric level of the Middle Ages, the good people of this nation will not stoop with her to indorse such an action.

The negroes of America are willing to let intelligence and fair play solve the problem, providing this system operates upon all alike. Are the white men willing to meet this operation on impartial grounds? They are not; so we appeal to the Federal Government. Let the registering system be in the hands of the Federal Government; and give the colored man what he is numerically entitled to, as registrars. This is simply fair and just.

Now as to the more specific limitation of the naturalization and grandfathers' clauses comedy, the "Old North State" gave her white citizens eight years to indulge in the gross abridgment of human rights, from 1900 to 1908, without any hindrances on the part of the white registrars. After 1908 the amendment calls for an educational qualification, all alike. But who dreams that under the present regime the colored man, after eight years of lawful fraud—according to the "Old North State"—will be dealt with fairly. I quote the following from the Hon. George H. White, the last negro Representative in the Federal Congress: "The registrar is invested with more discretionary power than any supreme judge of the bench of North Carolina. He is the sole judge of the qualifications of each voter." *The Independent*, 52: 176-7, Jan. 18, '00.

The authority given these men cannot escape the notice of honest men. Neither can it be doubted that many of these registrars are uneducated men. Similar to this, there are the Southern street

car conductors, who are vested with police power, to order, club or send to jail any colored gentleman or lady who refuses to move about from seat to seat, according to his dictation. So far as I have been able to observe and learn, these men, for the most part, are ignorant. They do not know the common rules of the English language. So Mr. White tells us that these registrars are the "sole judges" of all the voters. When in Congress, Mr. White, who is an eminent lawyer, represented a Congressional district of North Carolina, and his words are generally accepted. He further states that if a colored man goes to register, whose head is gray, face wrinkled with age and form bending toward the sun setting of his earthly pilgrimage, and the registrars say they doubt that he is of age, there is no alternative, unless he can present recorded proof. We cannot hope for justice from these men.

In speaking of the amendments of Alabama and Louisiana, I quoted the "Outlook," not because it is friendly to the negro race, but because the President is familiar with the policy of the magazine, and yet did not know that these amendments were operated according to color. I shall not quote the "Outlook" further, but shall quote briefly from other journals. Some that champion not the cause of the negro, but are willing to admit that he is discriminated against on account of color: "North Carolina takes rank as the fourth State of the South to adopt a Constitutional amendment virtually depriving the great bulk of the negro citizens of their right to vote. . . . The intention of this is (grandfathers' clause, etc.) to avoid the general disfranchisement of the white illiterates of the Old North Carolina stock, of whom there are a great many in the State, while disfranchising the illiterate negroes." R. Rs. 22:273-5 S. '00.

This journal also says: "We do not believe that the average Negro of the South is, at the present time, in any way benefited by his nominal right to take part in the business of politics and government. . . . As regards politics, he should be contented if he sees ahead of him a reasonable chance for his children."

I shall not discuss this journal's belief; I shall not lose time in dissenting from his reckless declaration that he should be contented if he sees better days coming. But, psychologically speaking, how could this journal ask us to be content, and at the same time admits that North Carolina discriminates "on account of color." No

one could reasonably ask us to be contented at such injustice.

The World's Work, speaking in sentiment similar to the Review, in commenting on the decision of the Supreme Court, in these test cases of Alabama, says: "Enlightened public opinion in every part of the country is well nigh unanimous in favor of a frank restriction of the suffrage in the Southern States made without reference to race, but the rub comes at the 'grandfathers' clause,' whereby illiterate whites are admitted to the franchise and illiterate blacks are excluded. In other words, the suffrage is really restricted on race lines." World's Work 6:3491-2, Je. '03.

No man speaks the truth who says these amendments do not discriminate on account of color. That infamous "grandfathers' clause" has been dealt with sufficiently by other writers, for every intelligent man, interested in the question, to know the evil it has done the colored race. This evil cannot continue unnoticed, unrestrained by the Federal Government. Truly the World's Work gives it a suitable name when it calls it a "rub."

I shall give one more reference, from the Pol. Sci. Q. In speaking on the Constitutional conventions of Alabama and Virginia, this paper says: "Looking first at the feature of the work of these conventions which attracted most public attention, we may examine the reason for negro disfranchisement as given by the delegates. The most fundamental argument was that drawn from the racial inferiority of the black man and his natural incapacity to perform political duties. This idea—or it might be better termed a feeling of instinct—found expression in words in both conventions, but was seen, and well proven also, by the fact that not a negro had been elected to either convention to protect the claim of his race." Pol. Sci. Q. 18:480-96, S. '03.

This substantiates what I said in regard to Alabama, when that amendment was under discussion. But it is plainly brought out here that the reason for this wholesale disfranchisement of a race, as given by the "delegates" of these conventions, where no negro was elected to "protect the claims of his race," seem to be "inferiority of the black man and his natural incapacity to perform political duties." This is folly. What judge, except "Judge Lynch," would condemn a man to be hanged without a hearing, or giving the man a chance to speak for his life? The King of Babylon told his dodging magicians that they were set on lying. Some men can well set

themselves on lying against a people, when they know there will be few attempts made to speak back or answer them.

Inferiority of the black man is one common issue of the South that needs to be "relegated to the limbo of forgotten issues." I call it an issue because it is a common doctrine preached in the South; not only by the heartless politicians, who play on ignorant passion of negro-haters, but by the pulpit as well. In what seems to be a rebuttal to ex-Congressman White, the editor of the *Presbyterian Standard*, Charlotte, N. C., asserted the "inferiority of the negro." The assertion was backed up by feeling, but not by proof. It is facts that the nation and the world want in this day and time on the momentous race question. This man's theory is that an illiterate white man is better than an illiterate negro. If a negro is a fool he is a fool—and if a white man is a fool he is a fool—a fool is but a fool, that settles it. To tell the world that there is a difference of blood may be pleasing to many, but he cannot eliminate from the blessed Book the writings of Paul, and still teach the whole truth.

I might go on giving opinions of able writers and leading magazines, but the fact has been established that whatever their opinions were on some phase of these amendments, they are agreed on racial discrimination. And how any man can be doubtful about this is puzzling to me.

The idea of Mr. Crumpacker should be insisted upon; and if Congress decides that these ignominious amendments shall stand, if Congress will go on record before the civilized world, as the Supreme Court has done, sanctioning such mockery of justice, then let the Republican Congress also go on record as carrying out the pledge in its platform that called for reduction of Southern representation in Congress. We want Congress to treat us fairly and squarely. We want the nation to hear our humble appeal for plain justice.

In speaking to the North Carolina Society, Mr. Taft makes the following statement: "Nor can we sympathize with an effort to exclude from the support of Republicanism in the South or to read out of the party these colored voters who, by their education and thrift, have made themselves eligible to exercise the electoral franchise. We believe that the best friend that the Southern negro can have is the Southern white man." It seems that the President-elect has accepted the amendments as described to-night. I have made

it very plain how Negro "education and thrift" made him eligible to vote according to the operation of these amendments. Yet I believe Mr. Taft is too good a man to do such a thing of himself. Then I wonder if Mr. Taft would require the humblest man of an oppressed people to do what he himself does not have to do, in order to vote? On the 8th of last October Mr. Taft registered in Cincinnati, after the following queries and answers: "How old are you? Fifty-one. How many years have you lived in the State of Ohio? Fifty-one. How many years in the country? Fifty-one. How many years in the precinct? Twelve. Married? Yes." I ask if Mr. Taft is willing to give the colored man the same opportunity to vote that he and other white men have? Is he willing to "square" the Southern amendments with the Fifteenth Amendment? I shall let Mr. Taft's own words answer this important question. In speaking to the Republicans of West Virginia last October, he puts himself squarely on record as being in favor of the colored man having the same right he himself had. He said: "I am advised that a very considerable part of your population is colored, and I want to say that no part of this population has a deeper sympathy on my part than they. Coming to this country, through their ancestry, against their will, there is imposed upon us, whose ancestry brought them here, the obligation to see that in every way they have a square deal. This is their only country; it is the only flag they love, and this is the standard for which they have shown themselves willing and anxious to lay down their lives when the exigencies of the country required. They are American citizens like the rest of us, and entitled to the same consideration."

Mr. Taft answers my question. He says that the colored man is entitled to the same "consideration" he himself is entitled to. When he went to register no "grandfathers' clause" of ignoble creation exempted him, neither, on the other hand, was he asked how much money he had, property he possessed, and nothing about his education. He was not required to read the Constitution of the United States, and straighten out, to the satisfaction of an ignoramus who does not want him to vote, the knotty technicalities thereof. He was not carried through the evaporating processes of Southern inglorious isms, through which the lone negro must pass. Nothing was asked with a view to keep him from voting. The colored man wants the "same consideration." Whether this was campaign fire,

or tried expressions of a great and generous heart, remains yet to be seen.

Mr. Taft told the North Carolina Society that he believed that the best friend the Southern negro can have is the Southern white man. He is mistaken in his belief. There were some who believed that, when slavery was leaping through the gates of Missouri Compromise line. There were some who believed that when the slave drivers were pitching their tents toward the gold-fields of California. Some believed it when the Fugitive Slave Act was adopted, and weeping men and women sent back at the expense of the government from freedom's shore to slavery and indescribable torture. Some believed it when Fort Sumter was fired upon and secession's flag unfurled in rebellion to the nation. But let us thank God that there were men who believed with a clearer conception. And let us thank Him that there are men to-day such as that matchless champion of human rights, and one of the grandest of American statesmen, Joseph B. Foraker. Men who do not believe that a people, who long for the repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment; a people who assault our women, lynch our men and make our race travel in baggage cars, without food, is our best friend.

Finally, fellow citizens, "let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts," and let him return to the Federal Constitution. Let there be a common ground for every voter to stand on—that is all we want.

In the late campaign Mr. Bryan asked, "Shall the people rule?" I doubt not the honesty of Mr. Bryan; I know he is well informed; he could not hope to be elected without the South. But how he could stand, with one foot on the amendments of the South and the other on Northern Democracy, and ask that question, I cannot understand. That question belongs to the scions of Lincoln. It is equivalent to Lincoln's "appeal to the people." The War President knew the people would rule and he wanted them to rule rightly. He believed that when the true light should burst upon the American people they would rule. The people ruled when Babylon fell. They ruled at Waterloo. They ruled forty-six years ago, when the Emancipation Proclamation burst the foundations of slavery and her kingdom fell. They ruled when the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments were placed on the Statute Books, to stay till Gabriel's trump shall shake the hills. They shall rule again when

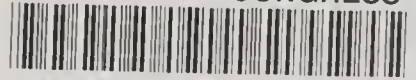
the triune-like North, East and West shall call order out of a confused South.

So be hopeful, my brethren of the South, and cease not to fight. Fight for manhood rights. Fight for a square deal. Fight till the fall of the present amendments of the South. Fight till the whole nation can truly sing:—

“Our fathers’ God, to thee,
Author of liberty,
To thee we sing:
Long may our land be bright
With freedom’s holy light;
Protect us by thy might,
Great God, our King.”

“Finis.”

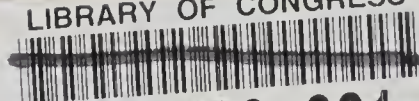
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